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FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8436  
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 1779  
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY 1305  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE PRIORITY  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 2188  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1576  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 001535

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DEPT FOR SCA/CEN

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SUBJECT: SOUTHERNERS UNLIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN BISHKEK  
DEMONSTRATION NOVEMBER 2

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR MARIE L. YOVANOVITCH, REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY: While traveling in Osh October 26-28 for a USAID-supported agricultural exposition and PAS-funded American rodeo event, the Ambassador met with religious leaders, political activists and university students about the overall situation in southern Kyrgyzstan and their opinions about the upcoming political rally to be held in Bishkek. On the subject of November 2, most believed that southerners would not turn out for the demonstration; some feared that the event in Bishkek would spiral out of control, resulting in violence similar to the events of March 2005. The population in the south seems to be less politically charged and cautiously awaits the outcome of the planned activities in the north. In all meetings including an interview with Osh TV, Ambassador took the opportunity to state the U.S. position that the November 2 demonstration is a Kyrgyz matter, but that both sides should operate in a peaceful, legal and constitutional manner. END SUMMARY.

UZBEK LEADER URGES U.S. MEDIATION  
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12. (C) During lunch with the Ambassador, Chairman of the International Center of Islamic Cooperation Sadykjan Kamalov expressed his concern regarding the increase in violent attacks on politicians and, now, religious leaders since President Bakiyev assumed power. When asked about the case of his slain brother, Muhammadrafiq Kamalov, he stated that the authorities have yet to share any new information but he is patiently waiting for results from their investigation. He also claimed that certain individuals wanted him to blame the Bakiyev regime publicly for his brother's death. However, he claimed to have refused to react to such provocation. Kamalov shared his fears, together with those of the wider community, that the tensions between the opposition and the president will lead to further violence, possibly during the upcoming rally in Bishkek on November 2.

13. (C) Kamalov also felt that if the tense situation were to result in violence, then accusations that the USG financed the upheaval would soon follow, especially if the USG remains silent and refuses to choose sides. Convinced that both sides of the political struggle respected the views of the U.S. Embassy and wanted U.S. mediation, Kamalov suggested that the Ambassador preside over a dialogue between the opposition and Bakiyev. Kamalov assured the Ambassador that the people of Kyrgyzstan need the USG's presence as a balance to Russian intervention. Ambassador told Kamalov that she always appreciates his advice, but that she does not see an opening for U.S. mediation nor has either side invited her to do so. In this meeting and all her other meetings, she noted the U.S. position that the demonstration is an internal matter, but it is important for all sides to act peacefully, legally and in accordance with the Kyrgyz constitution.

#### OSH STUDENTS NOT PLANNING TO ATTEND DEMONSTRATION

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14. (C) Students of Osh State University met with the Ambassador and shared their knowledge of the upcoming November 2 rally but expressed mixed feelings about participating, and clearly few, if any, were planning to attend. Students claimed that opposition party members requested that they come to local rallies to show support. Some students argued that these events were important to guard the balance between political groups. Others felt that such rallies were obstacles to the country's development and would lead to further instability. Overall, the youths were not enthusiastic about the political wrangling in Bishkek, but claimed to be watching closely for concrete action as a result of the event.

#### POLITICAL PARTIES WON'T TURN OUT EITHER

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15. (C) The Ambassador chaired a roundtable discussion with Osh representatives of various political parties, both pro-government and opposition. The discussion quickly turned into a show of both sides bickering about the roles of each other's parties and their effectiveness in shaping the fledgling democratic government. When asked about the upcoming rally in Bishkek, many agreed that as much as two-thirds of the population in the south may be unaware of such political activity. Those aware of the situation, one claimed, fear a sequel to last year's violent uprising. Opposition party members claim that most do not have access to independent media or the Internet, making it difficult to understand both sides of the argument. Another claimed that the population is tired of politics and simply wanted peace; he pointed out that Bakiyev has strong support in the south and that he is winning the media war, utilizing government-owned newspapers and television stations to promote his position. Some pro-government party members believed that a few political groups desire destabilization in order to take advantage of a chaotic situation and seize power. The group concluded that few from the south would participate in the November 2 demonstration and that there would not even be a parallel event in Osh, as there was during the spring demonstrations.

#### COMMENT

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16. (C) The mood of the population in Osh is clearly less politically charged than that of their neighbors to the north, and it still appears to be a Bakiyev stronghold. Osh Governor Jantoro Satybaldiyev, formerly of the opposition until his May appointment, told the Ambassador that if 75% of the south previously supported the President, now 90% supports southerner Bakiyev. He stated that southerners see the attempts to pressure Bakiyev to resign as northerners unwilling to allow Bakiyev to finish his term, unlike

northerner Akayev who enjoyed fifteen years in power. For those tracking the upcoming rally, concern about possible violence outweighs any excitement about possible political change. The population in the south seems to have adopted a cautious "wait and see" approach to the planned rally, although few will participate from Osh and most interlocutors indicated they expected the south to participate in force only from the home provinces of Deputies and opposition leaders Beknazarov and Tekebayev. END COMMENT.

YOVANOVITCH